The Infallibility of the Prophets in the QU'RAN

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

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point

A short text on the nature of Ismah (infallibility) and its necessity for the person holding the position of Prophethood. Examples from the Qur'an are discussed where it might appear to some that certain prophets of Islam departed from this state of .infallibility

Foreword

Since the departure of Rais`ul-Mubaligheen Allamah Al-Haj Sayyid Saeed Akhtar Rizvi (r.a.) from this earthly abode in ٢٠٠٢, the Mission is grateful to Hujjatul Islam wal .Muslimeen Al- Haj Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi (d.z.) for his wise guidance and advice

The Mission is grateful to Maulana Rizvi for his valued contribution. This is not the first book by Maulana Rizvi, we are printing. We have already published three of his most valuable studies in the past two years and we hope he will, by will of Almighty Allah, be .able to send us more

A sinful person, a transgressor of moral laws or a man dubious morality or respectability cannot be trusted and/or believed, as his own character is questionable. It is very pertinent, therefore that a prophet or Imam should be sinless and his .character impeccable

Our holy Prophet Muhammad (S) proved himself as as-Sadiq and al-Ameen among his ".people i.e. "truthful" and "trustworthy

History has recorded that he asked his people that 'if I tell you that there is an army beyond these mountains who are about to attack you, would you believe me?' they all replied

in unison “Yes we believe you because you have proved yourself as-Sadiq and Al-Ameen.

His enemies called him a magician and gave him all other names but they could never call him a liar, as he had proved himself a man of integrity and trustworthiness.

Allah (s.w.t.) in the Holy Qur'an eulogises his Prophet (S) in the following words "Verily there is for you in the Messenger of Allah an excellent pattern (of conduct"), ٣٣:٢١; the real excellence and the matchless beauty of his divinely moulded conduct and character.

“The Infallibility of the Prophets in the Qur'an” by Hujjatul Islam wal Muslimeen Al-Hajj Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi is an elaborated and serious treatise based on lectures he had delivered to the weekly classes on Islamic Theology.

I trust that the readers will benefit very much on the concept of "Ismah" in the light of the Qur'an.

F. H. Abdullah

Founding Member Trustee

Bilal Muslim Mission of Tanzania

Preface

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الحمد لله رب العالمين

والصلاه والسلام على

سيد النبيين وخاتم المرسلين محمد وآله الطاهرين

Muslims consider 'ismah, infallibility, as an important quality for the person who holds the position of prophethood. This quality is not confined to the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) but is also found in all the prophets

.and messengers of God who came before Islam

However, there are some verses of the Qur'an that apparently imply that Prophet Adam and some other prophets had committed sins. This treatise is an attempt to study the concept of 'ismah in light of

.the Qur'an

This treatise is an expanded version of the lectures that I had given to the weekly classes on Islamic theology at Toronto in ۱۹۹۵. I pray and hope that this serves as a .small but important step in studying the Qur'an from the thematic approach

.'Rabbana taqabbal minna, innaka Samí'u 'd-du'a

December ۲۰۰۱ / Shawwal ۱۴۲۲

Toronto Sayyid M. Rizvi

The Definition of 'Ismah

The word 'ismah literally means "protection". In Islamic terminology, it means "infallibility". Infallibility is defined as "a spiritual grace (lutf) of Allah to a person which (enables him to abstain from sins by his own free will."(۱

.A person who has been given that grace of God is called a ma'sum , infallible, sinless

This power of 'ismah does not make the ma'sum person incapable of committing sins. A ma'sum refrains from sins and mistakes by his power and will. If it were otherwise, then there would be no merit in being ma'sum! A ma'sum is able to abstain from sins because of (a) highest level of righteousness, and (b) ever-present consciousness and .love for God, and (c) certain knowledge about the consequences of committing sins

We come across some ordinary people who are very upright in their character and would not even dream of committing certain sins or crimes. The strength of their .character makes them relatively an infallible person

For example, it is within the power of any person to go naked on the streets. But ?would a person who was brought up as a good Muslim, ever think of doing so

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Al-Mufid, Tashihu 'l-I'tiqad, p. ۱۲۸ (in vol. ۵ of Musannafatu 'sh-Shaykhi 'l-Mufid, - ۱

Qum, ۱۴۱۳ AH); al-Hilli, al-Babu 'l-Hadi 'Ashar, p. ۱۷۹ (Qum: Nashr Navid Islam, ۱۳۶۷ {solar} with Persian translation by A.R.A. Bakhshaishi); also see its English by W.M. Miller (London: Luzac Co, ۱۹۵۸) p. ۵۸-۵۹.

No, because it is far below his dignity to behave in this way. It is not impossible for him to do so, but he will never even imagine of doing so. Why? Because he has been taught and brought up with the idea that such behaviour will tarnish his honour and is .beneath the dignity of a civilized human being

Similarly, though a ma'sum has the ability to commit sin, he never even imagines of committing a sin because (a) the love for God in his heart leaves no room for displeasing Him by committing sins, and (b) he is full aware of the consequences of .committing sins

Muslims the Belief in ‘Ismah

point

Although the majority of Muslims believe in the 'ismah of the prophets, there is a .great difference about the extent of their 'ismah

A. Sunni Muslims

As far as the Sunnis are concerned, they have a great difference of opinion among :themselves. Their views are as the followings

On lying infidelity (kufr): all Sunnis believe that prophets could not tell a lie, neither intentionally nor by mistake, nor could they be infidel before or after the declaration .of their prophethood

Other sins intentionally: all Sunnis believe that the prophets could not commit other .sins intentionally

Major sins unintentionally: majority believes that the prophets could commit such .sins; however, a minority says that this is not possible

Minor sins: majority believes that the prophets could commit minor sins, though not (such minor sins which would disgrace them in public's eyes.(١

B. Shí‘a Ithna-‘Ashariyyah Muslims

The Shí'as Muslims believe that all the

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۱ - See al-Qadhi 'Abdu 'l-Jabbar, Sharhu 'l -Usûli 'l-Khamsah, p. ۵۷۳-۵۷۵; al-Qawshaji, Sharhu 't-Tajríd, p. ۴۶۴.

Prophets were ma'sum, sinless and infallible; they could commit no sin— neither a major sin nor a minor sin; neither intentionally nor inadvertently; and this applies to .them from the beginning to the end of their lives

This is the belief of the Shí'a Ithna-'Ashariyyah. Below are three quotations from the Shí'a scholars of early days to the present century that shows the consistency of this .belief among the Shí'as

Shaykh Abu Ja'far as-Saduq, a scholar born during the Minor Occultation (ghaybat sughra) of the Present Imam and died in ۳۸۱ AH, says: “Our belief concerning the prophets, apostles, Imams and angels is that they are infallible (ma'sum), purified from all defilement (danas), and that they do not commit any sin, whether it be minor or major...He who denies infallibility to them in any matter appertaining to their status is ignorant of them. Our belief concerning them is that they are infallible and possess the attributes of perfection, completeness and knowledge, from the beginning to the (end of their careers...”(۱

Allamah Ibn Mutahhar al-Hilli (d. ۷۲۸ AH) writes the following on prophecy: “He is' (immune to sin from the first of his life to the last of it.”(۲

Shaykh Muhammad Rida al-Mudhaffar, a famous Shí'a scholar of the first half of this century, writes: “We believe that all the prophets are infallible...Infallibility means purity from all sins, both major and minor ones, and from mistakes and (forgetfulness.”(۳

?Why ‘Ismah

point

The prophets have to be ma'sum for the same reason for which they were

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As-Saduq, al-I'tiqadat,p. ۹۶ (in vol. ۵ of Musannafatu 'sh-Shaykhi 'l-Mufid); the - ۱ above quotation is based on its English translation, A Shi'ite Creed, A.A.A. Fyzee, tr.

.(Tehran: WOFIS, ١٩٨٢) p. ٨٧

.Al-Hilli, al -Babu '-Hadi 'Ashar, p. ١٧٩; in its English translation, see p. ٥٨ -٢

Al -Mudhaffar, 'Aqa'idu 'l-Imamiyyah, (Qum: Ansariyan, n.d.) p. ٥٣-٥۴; also see its -٣
.translation, The Faith of Shí'a Islam (London: Muhammadi Trust, ١٩٨٢) p. ٢١

sent: to guide and lead the people towards God. God, who decided to guide mankind, also intended to send immaculate and perfect human beings as models and .examples

If they were not ma'sum, then it would have been extremely difficult even to believe in the message let alone the example they present to us. There would be no trust or .confidence in whatever they say: it could be true; it could be false

Sending fallible prophets would have defeated the very purpose for which they were .sent: for the prophets to lead and guide, for the people to follow and obey

* * *

.The Qur'an also supports this reasoning

The ۱st Verse

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا لِيُطَاعَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ

We did not send any prophet, except so that he may be obeyed by the will of Allah."“ ((۴:۶۴

The verse very clearly presents the divine social order: the sole purpose of the prophets on this earth is to be obeyed by their followers, not that the followers are to check every action and statement of their prophet and then decided whether they .should obey or not

Such absolute obedience cannot be possible unless the prophets were ma'sum, free .from sins and mistakes

The ۲nd Verse

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ

(O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger..." (۴:۵۹“

In this verse, Allah is ordering us to obey Him and the Messenger. There are at least

ten other verses where Allah has used imperative forms to order the believers to obey the prophets and messengers. Besides these

verses, there are also many verses where Allah describes the virtue of obeying the prophets, and the dire consequences of disobeying them.(۱)

Secondly, in most such verses, Allah has mentioned obedience to Himself alongside with the obedience to His messengers. Actually, in one verse, obedience to the messenger is made synonymous with the obedience to Allah:

مَنْ يُطِعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ

"And whoever obeys the Messenger has actually obeyed Allah." (۴:۸۰)

Such assertion on part of Allah would have been impossible if the prophets and the messengers were not ma'sum and infallible. Otherwise, we would have found ourselves in an impossible situation: a non-ma'sum prophet or messenger exhorts us to do something which is wrong—should we follow or not. In both cases, we would be doomed. If we obeyed the prophet and committed the sin, then we would be guilty of disobeying Allah who has told us not to commit sins. If we disobeyed the prophet and refused to commit the sin, then we would be guilty of disobeying Allah who has told us to obey the prophets and messengers in an absolute way!

The ۳rd Verse

To the above verses, add those verses in which Allah forbids you to obey certain types of people who commit sins:

فَلَا تُطِعِ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ وَدُّوا لَوْ تُدْهِنُ فَيُدْهِنُونَ وَلَا تُطِعْ كُلَّ حَلَّافٍ مَهِينٍ

"So do not obey those who accuse you of lying... do not obey any mean swearer... forbidder of good, one who steps beyond the limits, a sinner." (۶۸:۸-۱۰)

وَلَا تُطِعْ مِنْهُمْ آثِمًا أَوْ

۱- See the following verses of the Qur'an: ۴:۱۴; ۴۸:۷; ۳۳:۶۶.

كَفُورًا

(And do not obey among them a sinner or an ungrateful person." (۷۶:۲۴"

وَلَا تُطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْمُسْرِفِينَ

(And do not obey the command of the prodigals..." (۲۶:۱۵۱"

When you put these verses alongside the previous verses, you will get the complete :picture

.a) The prophets are to be obeyed unconditionally

.b) The sinners and wrongdoers are not to be obeyed

c) The only logical conclusion is that the prophets are not in the categories of the .sinners or the wrongdoers

Humanism Infallibility

A few Muslims intellectuals, swayed by the idea of humanism, relativity and pluralism, wish to present the prophets and messengers of God as fallible in order to justify the .moral weaknesses found among ordinary people

This motive can also be observed in the early history of Islam when the scholars attached to the political establishments tried to water down the infallibility of the Prophet (S) in order to explain away the moral weakness and ethical wrongdoings of .the rulers of their time. We have such examples in the modern era also

Malcolm X, when he was a Minister in the Nation of Islam movement, describes how he attempted to justify the adultery of the self-proclaimed prophet, Elija Muhammad. :He says

I thought of one bridge that could be used if and when the shattering disclosure" should become public. Loyal Muslims could be taught that a man's accomplishments in his life outweigh his personal, human weaknesses. Wallace Muhammad [Elija's son] helped me to review the Qur'an and the Bible for documentation. David's adultery

with Bathsheba weighed less on

p: ٨

.history's scales, for instance, than the positive fact of David's killing Goliath

Thinking of Lot, we think not of incest, but of his saving the people from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Or, our image of Noah isn't of his getting drunk —but of his building the ark and teaching people to save themselves from the flood. We think of Moses leading the Hebrews from bondage, not of Moses' adultery with the Ethiopian women. In all of the cases I reviewed, the positive outweighed the ".negative

When he described his damage control strategy to Elija Muhammad, the leader said, "Son, I am not surprised...You always have had such a good understanding of prophecy, and of spiritual things. You recognize that's what all of this is—prophecy. You have the kind of understanding that only an old man has. I am David...When you read about how David took another man's wife. I'm that David. You read about Noah, who got drunk—that's me. You read about Lot, who went and laid up with his own daughters. I have to fulfill all of those things."(۱)

Tom Harpur, a theologian, an ex-Minister of the Church, and a columnist of the religious column of the Toronto Star, wrote the article "Not even Jesus claimed infallibility" on ۲nd May ۱۹۹۳. Once Jesus was stripped of infallibility, I was not at all surprised to see Harpur taking the second step of publishing another article a year latter entitled as "Gospels could support speculation that Jesus might have been gay."(۲)

This is

۱- A. Haley, The Autobiography of Malcolm X (NY: Ballantine Books, ۱۹۶۴) p. ۲۹۷-۲۹۹.

۲- See The Toronto Star, May ۲, ۱۹۹۳, p. B۵; May ۱۵, ۱۹۹۴, p. A۱۳

what happens when you take away the infallibility from the prophets and the messengers of God! Instead of looking up to them as models and guides, people — especially those in position of power— justify their own immoral behaviour and .lifestyle by presenting the prophets as fallible and sinners

The Allegorical Verses of the Qur’an

point

After explaining the meaning and importance of 'ismah for the prophets and messengers of Allah which is also supported by the Qur'anic verses we quoted above, some people become confused when they come across verses which give an .impression that Adam and other prophets committed some sins

This confusion will only be clear if we realize that the Qur'anic verses, according to the :Qur'an itself, are of two types

He is the one who sent upon you the book: some of its verses are clear (muhkamât)— .(these are the basis of the Book, while others are allegorical (mutashâbihât

As for those in whose hearts is perversity, they follow the allegorical verses, seeking“ to mislead and seeking to give (their own) interpretation. None know their (i.e., allegorical verses') interpretation except Allah and those who are firmly rooted in (knowledge...” (۳:۷

Those who do not differentiate between the clear and the allegorical verses will surely get confused when they apparently find two conflicting messages from the verses of the Qur'an. The issue of 'ismah is one of those issues in which people have .become victim of confusion

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:The situation, at this stage of our discussion, is as follows

Our earlier discussion concluded that the divine

.guides must be immaculate and above reproach

.Many verses of the Qur'an support this view, as mentioned above

But there are some verses of the Qur'an that apparently attribute sins and .wrongdoings to some prophets

?What should be done

We must accept those verses that are supported by our reason as the clear (muhkamât) verses. And the other verses should be considered allegorical (mutashâbihât) and their true meaning must be sought in the light of the muhkamât, the teachings of the Prophet, and the Imams of Ahlul Bayt who are the twin of the Qur'an by virtue of the famous saying of the Prophet that "I am leaving two precious things among you [for guidance]: the Book of Allah and my Ahlu 'l-bayt."(١)

In the next lesson, we will study those verses and see how can we interpret them and, .at the same time, hold on to our belief in the infallibility of the prophets

(.The Case of Adam (a.s

point

It will help us greatly if we, first of all, study the verses of the Qur'an about the .creation of Adam, his stay in Paradise, and his coming to the earth

Chapter ٢ (al-Baqarah) verses ٣٠-٣٩: The Creation

When your Lord said to the angels, "I am going to place a vicegerent on the earth," the angels said, "Will You place on the earth the one who shall act wickedly in it and shed blood; whereas we sing Your praise and glorify You?" Allah said, "Surely I know ".what you do not know

And [after creating Adam] Allah taught Adam all the names. Then He presented those to the

١- Ibn Hajar al-Makki, as-Sawa'iqu 'l-Muhriqah, chapter ١١, section ١.

angels and said, “Tell me the names of these if you are true [in what your assumption that you are more superior than Adam].” They said, “Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. You are surely the All-Knowing, the Wise.” [Then] He said, “O Adam! Tell them the names of those [persons].” When Adam told them those names, Allah said [to the angels], “Didn't I say to you that I know the unseen things of the heavens and the earth, and I know what you manifest and what ”.you hide

And [remember] when We said to the angels, “Prostrate before Adam.” All of them prostrated except Iblis, who refused and was haughty, and [thus] he became one of .the unbelievers

:In Paradise

After creating Hawwa}, We said, “O Adam, Dwell you and your wife in the Garden and] eat from it [freely] as many [things] as you wish; but do not approach this tree, ”. اَلظَّالِمِيْنَ otherwise you will become one of the ¨alimeen

from that [Garden by luring them to eat the (اَزَلَّهُمـا) But the Shaytan made them slip fruit of the forbidden tree] and thus got them out from the state [of felicity] in which .they had been

So We said [to Adam, Hawwa, and the Shaytan that, “All of you] get down [from the Garden to the earth] some of you being the enemies of the other, and there is on the [earth your abode and the necessities [of life] for a [fixed period of

time.” [Adam felt ashamed and intended to ask Allah's forgiveness.] So Adam learnt some words from his Lord, and Allah turned to him mercifully (تَابَ عَلَيْهِ). Surely He is the Most- Forgiving, the Merciful. We said, “All of you get down from the Garden. [Once you are on the earth], a guidance will certainly come to you from Me: whosoever follows My guidance, there will be no fear for them nor shall they grieve. But those who disbelieve and reject Our revelation, they are the inmates of the Fire, in it they shall abide.”

Chapter ۷ (al-A'râf) verses ۱۹-۲۵

[Allah said,] “O Adam! Dwell you and your wife in the Garden and eat from wherever you wish; but do not approach this tree, otherwise you will become one of the ¨alimeen اَلظَّالِمِيْنَ”

Then the Shaytan instilled temptation into them so as to reveal to them their private parts that were hidden from them. He said, “Your Lord has only prohibited you from this tree lest you both become rulers, or lest you become immortals.” [To ensure that his temptation will work, the Shaytan] swore to them both that, “Truly, I am a sincere adviser for you.” Thus he misled them by delusion.

So when they tasted [the fruit of] the tree, their private parts became manifest to them, and both of them started to cover themselves with the leaves of the Garden. Their Lord called out to them, “Did I not prohibit both of you from this tree and say to you that the Shaytan is your open

"?enemy

and if You ;(ظلمنا أنفُسَنا They said, "Our Lord! We have been unjust to ourselves (¨alamna
".do not forgive us and have mercy on us, we shall surely be among the losers

Allah said, "Get down [to the earth], some of you being the enemies of the others; and there is on the earth your abode and necessities [of life] for a time." He said, "Therein ".[you shall live, therein you shall die, and from it you shall be raised [again

Chapter ٢٠ (Ta Ha) verses ١١۶–١٢۶

And [remember] when We said to the angels, "Prostrate before Adam," all of them .prostrated except Iblis who refused and was haughty

Therefore, We said, "O Adam! this [Shaytan] is an enemy to you and your wife. So do in it :(تشقى) not let him expel you from the Garden, otherwise you will be uncomfortable [i.e., the Garden] you shall neither be hungry nor naked, and you shall neither be ".thirsty therein nor struck by the sun's rays

But the Shaytan instilled temptation to him by saying, "O Adam! Shall I guide you to the tree of immortality and a kingdom which will not decline?" When [they] both ate of that tree, their private parts became manifest to them and both of them started to .cover themselves with the leaves of the Garden

Then his Lord chose him, and .(غوى) his Lord, and so he erred (عَصى) Adam disobeyed .then He turned to him and guided him

Then] Allah said [to Shaytan and Adam], "You both get down from this [Garden}, some] of

you being the enemies of the other. [On the earth], a guidance will certainly come to you from Me, and then whosoever follows My guidance, he shall not go astray nor will he be unhappy. But whosoever turns away from My reminder, then he shall surely have a wretched life and we shall resurrect him blind."

Review of Adam's Story

۱. According to the experts of Islamic jurisprudence, the orders given by Allah are of two types:

Al-amr al-mawlawi, a legislative command. Such orders must be implemented; and, if someone disobeys such a command, then he is committing a sin and is liable to be punished. For example, the command to "say the daily prayers" or "do not eat the pork" is of such nature. Neglecting the daily prayers or eating of the pork is a sin and Allah can rightly punish the sinner.

Al-amr al-irshadi, an advisory command. Such orders are of advisory nature; their purpose is to inform the people about its consequences. However, if someone disobeys such an order, then he is not committing a sin; of course, he will have to face the consequences of not following the advice. For example, the command to "say bismillah when you slaughter the chicken" is of advisory nature.

Now, if someone slaughters the chicken and neglects the saying of "bismillah," then has he committed a sin? No, he has not committed a sin nor is he liable for a punishment for not saying the "bismillah" at that time. However, he will lose the right to

eat that chicken; that chicken cannot be eaten by a Muslim.

Another example: a person comes to his doctor complaining of cough. The doctor advises his patient to drink a certain medicine, a cough syrup. Now if the patient ignores that advice, then he is not committing a sin or a crime; but he will surely suffer the consequence — his illness will be prolonged and his health might deteriorate.

Conclusion: not all commands of Allah are of obligatory or prohibitive nature. The advice given to Adam and Hawwa was not of the legislative nature. It was not that that particular tree and its fruit themselves were forbidden. The prohibition of going near that tree and eating its fruit was al-amr al-irshadi. And going against such an order is not a sin; at most, the doer will have to face the consequences of ignoring that advice. In case of Adam and his wife, the consequence they faced was cancellation of their tenure as guests of Allah in the Paradise and its comforts. Remember that they were not supposed to stay in the Paradise forever; they were created for the earth, and their stay in the Paradise was meant to be temporary.

۲. The Garden/Paradise is not the place for test and trial. It is this earth on which human beings have been destined to go through test and trial by obeying the commands of Allah. The concept of sinning in case of human beings is connected to the worldly life.

In the story

p: ۱۶

of Adam itself, Allah makes this point clear when He orders Adam to go to the earth—He said,

"You both get down from this [Garden], some of you being the enemies of the other. [On the earth], a guidance will certainly come to you from Me, and then whosoever follows My guidance, he shall not go astray nor will he be unhappy. But whosoever turns away from My reminder, then he shall surely have a wretched life and we shall resurrect him blind." (۲۰:۱۲۶)

The order given to Adam in Heaven is not same as the orders given to human beings in this world—it is disobedience of the orders given on this earth that constitutes sin.

Finally, the Shaytan himself knows that he does not have the power to mislead the prophets, the messengers, and those who are graced with purity by Almighty Himself. When he was given respite by Allah, he declared the following:

"So I swear by Your Might (O Lord) that I will surely mislead them all together except the devoted servants of Yours from among them." (۳۸:۸۲-۳; ۱۵:۳۹-۴۰)

And Allah responds to him by saying,

"As for my servants, you have no power over them except those who follow you... from among the misled people..." (۱۵:۴۱)

The Satan himself knew the limitation of his influence upon the chosen servants of Allah in this world.

۳. Those who believe that Adam committed a sin, describe the eating of the forbidden fruit as the "sin" and Adam's expulsion from the heaven

as the “punishment”. However, this relationship between the sin and its punishment is not valid because of two reasons:

Firstly, Adam was destined to come to the earth anyway. Allah had declared even before creating Adam that “I want to place a vicegerent on the earth.” So coming of Adam to the earth is not a punishment; whether or not he ate the forbidden fruit, Adam would have come to the earth anyway. So that was not a punishment.

Secondly, if coming of Adam to the earth was a “punishment” of eating the forbidden fruit, then he should have been returned to the paradise after Allah “forgave” him. Forgiveness means “canceling the punishment”—Adam should have been taken back to the paradise. This did not happen, which proves that Adam's coming to the earth was not a “punishment”; and eating was not a “sin.”

۴. What about the words in the story Adam that imply that he committed sin?

After studying the issue of 'ismah from the Qur'anic point of view, if we come across such words we have to interpret them in a way that they are in harmony with the other verses of the Qur'an. Now let us look at three such words that have occurred in the story of Adam.

First: the word "¨alimeen الظالمین" is from ¨ulm ظلم. This word has four meanings: (a) to put something in a wrong place; (b) to oppress; (c) to make haste; and (d) to come to harm.(۱)

We see that the last two meanings

۱- - See al-Munjid, the famous Arabic dictionary that gives following meanings to ad-dulm: الجور، وضع الشیء فی غیر موضعه، کل ما أعجلته عن أوانه،

of the word are in harmony with what we explained about 'ismah. For example, verse :۲:۳۵ would read like this

We said, “O Adam, Dwell you and your wife in the Garden and eat from it [freely] as many [things] as you wish; but do not approach this tree, otherwise you will be one of ”.those who put themselves into harm

Here, “harm” would mean facing the difficulties of the earthly life and losing the .comforts of the heaven

or

otherwise, you will be one of those who make haste.” Here, “making haste” would..." mean that they were eventually to go to the earth but by eating from the forbidden tree they hastened their departure to a place where they will lose the comforts of the .Garden

is supported by the next verse that says الظالمين This meaning of the word ¨alimeen that the Shaytan “got them out from the state [of comfort] in which they had been.” Also the verse ۲۰:۱۱۷ supports this interpretation: “O Adam! this [Shaytan] is an enemy to you and your wife. So do not let him expel you from the Garden, otherwise you will be uncomfortable: in it [i.e., the Garden] you shall neither be hungry nor naked, and you shall neither be thirsty therein nor struck by the sun's rays.” In other words, here food, clothing and shelter are readily provided for you; you will lose these comforts on .the earth. Here everything is provided but there you will have to work for yourselves

means عَصَى Second: the word

disobeyed". This does not necessarily imply sin because disobedience can be" attributed to two types of commands: al- amr al-mawlawi (a legislative command) or al-amr al-irshadi (an advisory command). If a person goes against the advisory command, then he has "disobeyed" but not "sinned". We have already explained that commands of Allah do not always have the force of obligation or prohibition. And, by keeping in mind those verses which prove the 'ismah, we have no choice but to ."interpret this word as "disobeyed the advisory command

means "he erred". But this does not necessarily mean غَوَى Third: Similarly, the word sin. It can easily be applied to at-tarku 'l-awla which is possible for a prophet to do. At-means "leaving the more appropriate behaviour". "Adam (ترک الأولی) tarku 'l-awla erred" would mean that even if the command of Allah did not carry the force of legislative prohibition, still Adam should have obeyed it. In disregarding the advisory command of Allah, Adam is guilty not of a sin but of not living up to the appropriate .behaviour which is expected from a prophet or messenger of God

If Adam did not commit a sin, then why does Allah talk about repentance for Adam .۵ and forgiveness from Himself, and uses so strong words as

?etc عصى and الظالمين

Firstly, When a prophet like Adam commits at-tarku 'l-awla, it is quite appropriate for him to ask Allah for pardon—not necessarily for a sin but for an inappropriate behaviour. So "repenting" does not necessarily mean that Adam

must have committed a sin; it is quite appropriate rather advisable even after .committing at-tarku 'l-awla

Secondly, the use of harsh words by Allah in describing the story of Adam is acceptable by keeping in mind the status of Adam. Although Adam did not commit a sin, it was improper for him to adopt an inappropriate behaviour. The people with high ranks are expected to live by the standard that is higher than that of the normal human beings. As the saying goes: the virtuous deeds of the pious are considered .'sins' by those who are nearest to God — hasanâtu 'l-abrâr sayyi'âtu 'l-muqarrabin

(.The Case of Prophet Ibrahim (a.s

point

There are some verses in the Qur'an that apparently attribute sins and wrong doings .to Prophet Ibrahim (a.s.). We shall look at the three most important such examples

Chapter ۶ (al-An'am) verses ۷۵-۸۰

Remember] when Ibrahim said to his uncle, Azar, "Do you take idols for gods? Surely] I see you and your people in manifest error." Thus We were showing Ibrahim the kingdom of the heavens and the earth so that he might be of (al-muqinin) those who .[are sure [of their faith

So when the night outspread over Ibrahim, he saw a star; he said, "This is my Lord." But when the star set [in the morning,] he said, "[This cannot be my Lord because it ".[has passed away,] I do not like the transitory [gods

On the next night,] when he saw the moon rising, he said, "This is my Lord." But when] the moon set he said, "If my Lord

had not guided me, then I shall surely be of (adh-dhaliyn) the people who have gone ".astray

In the morning,] when Ibrahim saw the sun rising, he said, "This must be my Lord] [because] this is greater [than the star and the moon!]" But when the sun set, he said, "O my people, surely I am free from what you associate [with Allah.] I have sincerely turned myself to Him who originated the heavens and the earth, and I am not one of ".the polytheists

Many historians of religion take Ibrahim as the founder of the monotheistic idea. This definitely goes against the Islamic view that monotheism was the original faith of .mankind from the days of Adam (a.s.), and that later on people became polytheists

The Qur'anic statements quoted above have been used as a proof of the evolutionary phases in Ibrahim from polytheism to monotheism. This is, obviously, an incorrect .reading of the Qur'an

This entire passage quoted above actually shows that Prophet Ibrahim was actively .١ engaged in combating idol - and nature-worshipping. Reading the whole passage does not raise any problem about the 'ismah of Prophet Ibrahim. He did not raise the possibility of the star, the moon and the sun being gods as a fact; it was raised only as a part of his method of disproving such a possibility. In debates, it is quite common to .initially accept the view of your opponent in order to lead him to your own view

If you read the first part of

the passage where Ibrahim is disputing with his own uncle(۱) against idol-worshipping and also Allah's statement that "We were showing...so that he might be of those who are sure [of their faith]," it shows that he was a true believer before he engaged in .debate with the idol- and nature-worshippers

Even the passage where he says, "If my Lord had not guided me, then I shall surely .۲ be of the people who have gone astray," is a conditional statement. It says "if" and "then". And since the first part did not take place, therefore the second part is not .relevant

Chapter ۲۱ (al-Anbiya') verses ۶۲-۶۳

In pursuant of his mission against idol-worshipping, Ibrahim one day smashed all the :all idols of the temple except the big one. Then the Qur'an says

The idol-worshippers] said, "Who has done this to our gods? He surely must be one of] the unjust people." [Some of them] said, "We have heard a youth speaking [ill] of them, ...".and he is known as Ibrahim

When Ibrahim was brought to the king,] he said, "Rather it was this their leader that] ".has done it— ask the [smashed idols] if they can speak

The objection against 'ismah is that if Ibrahim was ma'sum, how could he lie? Again, if we look at the entire passage, we see that Ibrahim wanted to make his people realize that idols are not worth worshipping—if they cannot defend themselves or even talk, .then how can they help you

Secondly, Ibrâhím's answer is conditional: "...if they can speak." Ibrâhím's answer was rhetorical

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The Qur'an uses the word "ab" for Azar who was an idol-worshipper. He was not -۱ father of Ibrahim; he was his uncle. Look at the following verse where he eventually disassociates himself from Azar: ۹:۱۱۴. On the other hand, we see that Ibrahim, at the

last stage of his life, prays for his “walid,” a word that is used for the real father. See .verse ۱۴:۴۱

and intended to force the people to think. This becomes clearer from the following verse: ۲۱:۶۵-۶۶

They said, “You know that the idols do not speak.” Ibrahim said, “Well then, do you... ”.worship, besides Allah, [the idols] that neither benefit you in any way nor harm you

Chapter ۲ (al-Baqarah) Verse ۲۶۰

And [remember] when Ibrahim said, “My Lord! Show me how You give life to the dead.” Allah said, “What, do you not believe [in resurrection]?” He answered, “Certainly ”.[I believe, I am asking this] so that my heart may be at ease

”....Allah said, “Take four of the birds

Some people use this incident as a proof that Ibrahim did not believe in resurrection. This is absolutely incorrect. The question and answer are themselves very obvious ”.[that he believed. “Certainly [I believe

?Then why did he ask for a demonstration of resurrection

Firstly, Ibrahim surely believed in God's power of giving life to dead. However, this was a belief based on the revelation of Allah just as we believe in it based on the .information reached to us through the prophets and the Imams

Secondly, Ibrahim wanted to elevate the level of his belief from “information” to “demonstration”. According to traditions, one day Ibrahim saw a dead fish, half in the water, the other half outside the water. He also saw that sea creatures were eating away one half of the fish and land animals were eating away the other half. This incident made Ibrahim wonder about the issue of resurrection. We are using the word .”“wonder” not “doubt

This is when he had the desire of seeing a demonstration of Allah's power of resurrection, and this also explains the way Allah asked him to kill and mix the parts of .the four birds

In conclusion, Ibrahim believed in resurrection before as well as after this event. The difference is that his belief prior to this event was based on the information about the future revealed to him by God; whereas after this event, his belief in resurrection was based on visual demonstration done by him with Allah's permission. This is similar to a Muslim who has been to hajj: before his journey, he believed that the Ka'bah existed; but the basis of his belief changed after his journey—now he has seen the Ka'bah with .his own eyes

(.The Case of Prophet Musa (a.s

Chapter ۲۸ (al–Qasas) Verses ۱۵–۱۶

And he entered the city at a time when its people were not aware [of his presence], and found therein two men fighting: one was from his party and the other was from his enemies. [When] the one who was his follower [saw Músa, he] cried out to him for help against the one who was from his enemies. So Músa [went and] struck him with .his fist and killed him

surely he is an open enemy who ;(عمل الشیطان) Then Músa] said, "This is Shaytan's deed] unjust to (ظلمتُ نَفسی) leads [others] astray." [Músa] said, "My Lord! I surely have been forgave him; He is the Forgiving, (غَفَرَ) [forgive me." So [Allah (فاغفر لی) myself; therefore ".the Merciful

The common translation

of the last verse combined with the statement about the Shaytan creates conflict with the concept of 'ismah, infallibility. When reading these verses, keep the following :points in mind

What Músa did was not a crime; he went to help an oppressed person and, in the process, struck a blow with his fist at the oppressor. This ended, unexpectedly, in the death of the oppressor. Helping an oppressed person is a praiseworthy act in itself. The death of the oppressor, at most, can be labeled as accidental death that is not a .crime or a sin

Músa's words that "This is Shaytan's deed" does not necessarily refer to his own ,action. Remember that the Shaytan himself knew his limits; he says to Allah

I will certainly mislead them all together except the devoted servants of Your's…" (from among them." (۳۸:۸۲-۸۳

,And Allah says to the Shaytan

As for my servants, you have no power over them except those who follow you…" (from among the misled people…." (۱۵:۴۱

!And Músa surely was not among the misled servants of Allah

So the sentence that "this is Shaytan's deed" refers to the mischief started by the .oppressor himself

As for the sentence that "My Lord I have surely been unjust to myself," this must be interpreted in light of the meaning of dhulm explained in the case of Prophet Adam (a.s.). Its correct translation would be: "My Lord I surely have put myself into harm" — after the accidental death of the oppressor, Músa was

.pursued by the people of Fir'awn

Then how do you explain the sentence after that which says that "ighfir li" which ?"means "forgive me" and "ghafara" which means that Allah "forgave him

Again, the common meaning of ghafara (forgiving) is not applicable here. The word "ghafara" also means "to watch over someone" or "to guard someone" or "to cover something [i.e., protect it]". This second meaning does not imply any sin; it just means that by accidentally killing the oppressor, Músa found himself in harm and trouble from the people of Fir'awn; and, therefore, he prays "...therefore, guard me and Allah ".guarded him

This meaning of the last sentence is also supported by another verse of the Qur'an which quotes Allah saying to Músa that, "...when you killed an [Egyptian] man [accidentally and were being pursued by Fir'awn's people], We delivered you from the worry..." (۲۰:۴۰) So the dhulm is explained in this verse as "worry"; and "ghafara" is ."explained as "delivered

(.The Case of Prophet Yunus (a.s

point

Another verse which is considered to be incompatible with the concept of 'ismah is .(.about Prophet Yúnus (a.s

:Chapter ۲۱ (al-Anbiya') verses ۸۷-۸۸

And (remember) Yúnus, when he went away in anger; and he thought that We would never have power over him (naqdira). Then he called in the darkness [of night, sea, and fish]: "There is no god but You, glory be to Thee; surely I am one of the unjust .((¨alimeen

So We responded to him and delivered him from the grief, and thus do We deliver the .believers

The common translation of the words

naqdira and ¨alimeen make these two verses incompatible with the concept of 'ismah.

۱. The first question against 'ismah in this passage is about the action of Prophet Yúnus: he left his people when the punishment subsided without him knowing about it. Was Yúnus angry at Allah?

The most that this verse says is that Yúnus went away in anger; it does not say that he was angry with Allah. So we have no choice but to interpret this verse by saying that Yúnus left the people while he was angry with them for not believing him.

۲. The second question is about the sentence: “He thought that We would never have power (naqdira) over him.” Some people have taken the word naqdira in the meaning of “having power,” thus imply that Yúnus went away in anger thinking that God “would never have power over him.”

Firstly, if this meaning is to be taken seriously, then Yúnus would become a kafir, an unbeliever!

Secondly, the word naqdira (which is from qadr) has been used many times in the Qur'an for “restricting of the provision” by Allah. For example, in chapter ۱۳, verse ۲۶, Allah says, “Allah expands and straitens (yaqdiru) the provision for whomsoever He pleases.” Or, for instance, in chapter ۸۹, verses ۱۵-۱۶, Allah says: “As for man: when his Lord tries him by treating him with honour and giving him an easy life, he says 'My Lords honours me.' But when He tries him by straitening (qadara) his provision for him, he says

".'My Lord has disgraced me'

In conclusion, we can say that the first sentence of the passage under discussion means: And (remember) Yúnus, when he went away in anger; and he thought that We would never straiten [the provision] over him." This, at most, means that Yúnus thought that because he was God's prophet, his Lord would never straiten his provision for him; he had taken Allah's provision for granted. It has nothing to do with .issue of Allah having no power over him

If Yúnus had committed no sin by leaving his people, then why did he say that, .٣ ?"“surely I am one of the ¨alimeen, the unjust

As mentioned earlier in the case of Prophet Adam (a.s.), the word ¨ulm does not necessarily imply “injustice” and “sin”. It also means “to make haste” and “to come to harm”. Any of these two meanings are compatible with the concept of 'ismah and also .correct in the case of Prophet Yúnus

The verse would then mean as follows: “There is no god but You, glory be to Thee; surely I am one of those who make haste” or “There is no god but You, glory be to ."Thee; surely I am one of those who come to harm

This explanation is further supported by the next verse in which Allah says, “So We responded to him and delivered him from the grief, and thus do We deliver the believers.” The ¨ulm mentioned in the prayer of Yúnus is explained by Allah as "al-ghamm—grief”, and

."not as sin or injustice; that is why Allah said "najjayna—delivered" and not "forgiven

(The Case of Prophet Muhammad (S

point

Before we proceed further, it is advisable to refresh your memory by reading the first part of the discussion on 'ismah, especially the verses which prove the infallibility of .the prophets in general

Chapter ۹۳ (az-Zuha) verse ۷

Did He not find you an orphan and so gave shelter? And find you dhalan and so He" "?guided? And find you in need and so made rich

If the Prophet of Islam (S) is infallible (ma'sûm), then why does Allah say that He found him dhalan which normally means "one who has gone astray" or "one who strays from ?"the right path" or "one who is lost

First of all, the common meaning is not applicable here. In the normal usage of the word, it is applied for non-believers. But this meaning is negated by another verse of ,the Qur'an where Allah says

I swear by the star when it goes down, that your companion {i.e., Muhammad (S)}" (has not gone astray (ma dhalla), nor does he err..." (۵۳:۱-۲

Secondly, even if we take it in the meaning of "lost" or "gone astray", it could be interpreted without denying the 'ismah of the Prophet (S): you can say that he was .wandering in search of revelation

Finally, the idea of being "lost" does not always have a negative sense to it. Read the following two sentences carefully: (۱) "I was lost." (۲) "The ring was lost." In the first sentence, there is a negative sense; but

in the second sentence, there is no negative connotation to the ring that is lost. If we use the word “lost” for the Prophet (S) in the second sense, then there should be no problem at all. We can then explain the verse as follows: “And [did not God] find you ”.[lost [among your people], and so He guided [them to you

The last interpretation is supported by 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas, a close companion of the .(.Prophet (S), and also by Imam 'Ali ar-Ridha (a.s

:Chapter ۴۸ (al–Fath) verses ۲–۳

:Verily We granted thee a manifest victory; so that God may

,forgive thee thy sins of the past and those to follow

,fulfill His favour to thee

and guide thee on the straight path

.and that God may help thee with powerful help

These verses were revealed in reference to the Treaty of Hudaybiyya in which the Prophet (S) made peace with unbelievers of Mecca in the year ۶ A.H. The Prophet (S) had gone with only ۱۴۰۰ lightly armed Muslims with the intention of doing the minor pilgrimage ('umrah). The idol-worshippers of Mecca barred them from entering Mecca; after much discussion, they agreed to a ten years peace treaty with the .(Prophet (S

Allah described this peace treaty as a “manifest victory”. Then He goes on to explain why He gave this “manifest victory” to the Prophet (S). He gives three reasons: The .first reason is very interesting as well as controversial

”.So that God may forgive thee thy sins of the past and those to follow“

This clearly implies that Prophet

Muhammad (S) had committed sins in past and could commit sins in future; he was .not a ma'sûm

* * *

:The problem is that this interpretation of the verse creates other problems

.It goes against the verses we discussed earlier about 'ismah in general

The first reason, as commonly translated, seems out of place and irrelevant to the issue of the peace treaty. There is no clear connection between granting a manifest victory and forgiving of sins. Moreover, it would seem ridiculous to help a messenger to spread the word of Islam ("to submit to God's laws") and then grant absolute !license for committing sins to that very messenger

It would seem that in Islam, the Prophet (S) is above the law: we are forbidden from .٣ !committing sins but he is allowed

* * *

In light of these problems with the common translation, many exegetists have :attempted other interpretations

;"Some say it means "sins of Adam and sins of the Muslims .١

Others say it means "past sins of your ummah are forgiven and their future sins will .٢ ;"be forgiven by your intercession

."Yet others say it means "your past and future at-tarku 'awla is forgiven

Besides lacking any credible basis, such interpretations fail to relate the particular .sentence to the event of Treaty of Hudaybiyyah

* * *

The best interpretation that I have seen is of 'Allamah at-Tabataba'i in his al-Mizan. At-Tabataba'i goes to the literal meaning of the words: dhanb which is commonly

used for “sin” and ghafara which is commonly used

."for "forgiving

The word dhanb is from the verb- form dhanaba which means "to follow"; its noun form dhanab means "tail; something that follows". So the main idea in the word dhanb is the concept of something following the other. "Sin" is known as "dhanb" because it is .an act that entails evil consequence in form of Allah's displeasure and punishment

The word ghafara actually means "to cover or conceal something" which also implies the meaning of protecting something. This word is used in its original meaning in our hadith literature. For example, a hadith say "Ghaffir ash -shayb bi 'l-khidhab" which means "Cover the white hair by dyeing" or "Conceal the old age by dyeing." "Forgiving" is known as "ghafara" because by forgiving, Allah covers the evil consequence of sins, .and protects the sinner from it

With the literal meanings of the two crucial words in the verse: dhanb and yaghfira, the entire passage under discussion becomes more meaningful and relevant to the :Treaty of Hudaybiyya. The verses would now read as follows

Verily We granted thee [in the Treaty of Hudaybiyya] a manifest victory; so that God may protect you from the past and future consequences of your [policy with the .[Meccans

Prophet Muhammad (S)'s mission had angered the idol-worshippers of Mecca to the extent that they planned to kill him and when they failed, they waged war after war against him. This had greatly limited the missionary activities of the Muslims outside Medina. With the peace-treaty of Hudaybiyya, the Prophet (S) got

the chance to peacefully convey his message to all people of the Arabian Peninsula .and outside it

History shows that within three years of the peace treaty of Hudaybiyya, almost all of Arabia had come into the fold of Islam — the year ۹ AH is known as the "Year of Delegations" since many delegations of Arab tribes came to Medina and accepted Islam. It was this peace treaty that laid the ground for the fall of Mecca at the hands .of the Muslims

So Almighty Allah fulfilled His promise by saying that He gave a great victory through the treaty of Hudaybiyya: Through this treaty, He protected the Prophet (S) from evil consequence of unbelievers' reaction to what Muhammad (S) had done before and .whatever he did after the peace treaty

Thus the verse is connected to the treaty of Hudaybiyya and our belief in the 'ismah of .the Prophet of Islam (may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is also intact

Chapter ۸۰ ('Abasa) ۱–۱۰

He frowned and turned (his) back because there came to him a blind man. And what would make you know that he may purify himself; or he may be reminded and the ?reminding would benefit him

But when a free from need (i.e., rich person come to you), then you address yourself ...to him

But when a hard-working person comes to you (and he also fears), then you turn !?away from him

The Event: These verses refer to an incident in Mecca, when 'Abdullah bin Umm Maktúm, a blind man, came

to a gathering where the Prophet (S) was talking to some people among whom were some leaders of Quraysh ('Atba bin Rabí'a, Abu Jahl, 'Abbas, Ubayy bin Khalaf, Umayya bin Khalaf) were also present. When 'Abdullah bin Umm Maktúm came to .that gathering, someone frowned and turned away from him

The Problem: Who frowned and turned away from the blind man? The Qur'an does .not give the name. There are two versions of this story

١st View: Sunni sources and a few Shi'í sources say that it was the Prophet of Islam (S) .who frowned and turned away from the blind man

٢nd View: Most Shi'í sources, following the teachings of the Imams of Ahlu 'l -Bayt (who obviously knew the Prophet (S) better than others), say that it was one of the .Umayyid leaders of Quraysh who frowned and turned away from the blind man

* * *

We accept the second view because there is an internal proof from the Qur'an that it .was well below the character of Prophet Muhammad (S) to behave in this way

a) Allah addresses the Prophet (S): "Nun. I swear by the pen and what [the angels]) write that you are not, by the grace of your Lord, a lunatic; and that surely you shall have a perpetual reward [for your work]; and most surely you are on the sublime ([level] of morality." (۶۸:۱-۴

This testimony about the Prophet (S)'s character was revealed after súrah al-Iqra and .before súrah an-Najm; i.e., before the revelation of the verses under discussion

How can a person described so highly by Allah allegedly behave in such a repelling !manner

b) In the very early stage of his mission, the Prophet (S) was clearly told how to) behave in conveying his message to the people: “And warn thy nearest relatives; and be kind to him who follows you of the believers.” (۲۶:۲۱۴-۲۱۵) In another verse, Allah says, “Therefore, declare openly what you have been ordered, and turn away from (the polytheists.” (۱۵:۹۴

It seems improbable that a Prophet (S) praised so highly in the previous verse and told .to be kind to the believers, would frown when approached by a blind person

c) The character of the Prophet (S) and his criterion of preference have historically) been proved by the following event: Many early converts to Islam were the oppressed and weak people of Mecca like Bilal, 'Ammar, Salim Maula Abi Hudhayfa, Ibn Mas'ûd, Miqdad and others. The Qurayshi leaders once told the Prophet (S) that, “Why do you sit among these people? If you turn them away from yourself, we might accept you as our leader.” The Prophet (S) refused. And Allah confirmed the Prophet (S)'s response :by revealing the following verse

And do not drive away those who call upon their Lord at morning and evening“ desiring His favour. Nothing of their account falls upon you, and nothing of your account falls upon them. So if you drive them away, you will become one of the unjust. In this way, We try some of them

by others. [Because of their spiritual perfection, Allah exalted those poor persons, and thus He tries those rich people who lack faith and] who say, 'Are these [poor people] the ones upon whom Allah has been gracious to among us?' Does not Allah know very (well the grateful [servants]?" (۶:۵۲-۵۳

In conclusion, ascribing the act of frowning and turning away from the blind man .(cannot be ascribed to the holy Prophet of Islam (S

:Chapter ۶۶ (at-Tahrim) Verses ۱-۱۲

O Prophet! Why do you forbid (for yourself) what God has made lawful for you? You .۱ .seek to please your wives; and God is Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful

Indeed, God has made lawful for you the dissolution of your oaths (in such cases), .۲ .and God (alone) is your Lord. And He is All-knowing, the Wise

When the Prophet confided to one of his wives (Hafsa) a matter, but when she .۳ divulged it (to 'A'isha) and God apprised him about it — he made known a part of it (i.e., the talk between Hafsa and 'A'isha) and avoided a part of it. So when he informed her (Hafsa) about it, she said, "Who informed you of this?" He said, "Informed me, the All-".Knowing, the All-Aware

If you two ('A'isha and Hafsa) turn (in repentance) unto Allah, then indeed your .۴ hearts are inclined (to righteousness) but if you two back up each other against him, then verily God is his Protector; and Jibrail, the most virtuous among the believers, and the angels will thereafter back him

.up

Happly his Lord, if he (Muhammad (S)) divorces you, will give in your place wives .۵
better than you (who will be) submissive, faithful, obedient, repentant, prayerful,
{ ...} observers of fast, widows and virgins

God set forth the similitude of those who disbelieve the wife of Núh and the wife of .۱۰
Lút: they both were under two of Our righteous servants, but they were unfaithful and
they (i.e., their husbands) availed them nothing against God; and it was said to them
".(the two wives): "Enter you both the fire with those who enter it

God set forth the similitude of those who believe (A) the wife of Fir'awn, when she .۱۱
said, "O My Lord! Build for me a house in the Garden and deliver me from Fir'awn and
".his doing, and deliver me from the unjust people

And (B) Maryam, the daughter of 'Imran, who guarded her chastity; and We .۱۲
breathed into her Our spirit (i.e., 'Isa), and she testified the truth of the words of her
.Lord and His scriptures, and she was of the obedient ones

This chapter was revealed in regard to Hafsa and 'A'isha, the wives of the Prophet (S). Besides Khadijah, the only wife of the Prophet who bore child for him was Mariya Qibtiyya, the Egyptian slave gifted to him by the Egyptian King. After the birth of Ibrahim (the Prophet's son from Mariya), 'A'isha and Hafsa became very jealous of .Mariya

There are many views on the occasion for the revelation

of this chapter. The narrations are different but most relate to the jealousy of Hafsa and 'A'isha against Mariya and/or Zaynab bint Jahash. A version of the event considered authentic by some of our scholars is as follows: Hafsa entered her room and found the Prophet (S) with Mariya; she became very upset with him. The Prophet (S), in order to calm Hafsa, took an oath that he would not see Mariya again. He also .asked Hafsa to keep the issue of his oath to herself and not divulge it to anyone

Another version says that in order to change the Prophet (S)'s love for Zaynab bint Jahash, Hafsa and 'A'isha made a plan that whenever the Prophet (S) came from Zaynab, they both would say that his mouth is smelling bad—and attribute the bad smell to a drink of honey (maghafír) which Zaynab always made for the Prophet (S). The Prophet (S) took an oath not to partake the honey-drink that Zaynab made for him. He also asked Hafsa to keep the issue of his oath to herself and not divulge it to (anyone.(١

* * *

Did the Prophet (S) commit a sin by making an oath that he will no longer see his ?slave-girl, Mariya Qibtiyyah or no longer drink the honey-drink made by Zaynab

The chapter as a whole is mostly directed to the attitude of the wives who conspired against the Prophet (S): it talks about God willingly to replace those two wives with better wives and asks them

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For various version of the event, see at-Tabataba'i, al-Mizan fi Tafsiri 'l-Qur'an, vol. -١ ١٩ (Tehran: Darul Kutub, ١٣۶٢ [solar]) p. ٣٩١-٣٩۵; Abu 'l-Ma'la Mawd-di, Tafhimu 'l-Qur'an, vol. ۶ (Lahore: Idara-e Tarjumanu 'l-Qur'an, ١٩٩۴) p. ١۶-١٧; Fakhru 'd-Din ar-.Razi, Mafatihu 'l-Ghayb, vol. ٣٠ (Beirut: Daru 'l-Kutub, ١٩٩٠) p. ٣٧

to repent. The opening verse, at most, is a friendly rebuke by God to the Prophet (S) for imposing un-necessary deprivation upon himself. There is no prohibition in making an oath to abstain from a thing that is permissible. If a person makes such an oath and then indents to nullify it, then he is permitted to do so after paying expiation for it.(۱)

So these verses cannot be used against the concept of infallibility of the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, peace be upon him and his progeny.

۱- See ۵:۸۹.

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ٩

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ٢٠٠٧, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

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replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

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acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

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:Appreciation

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